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PRESERVING THE PAST AND THE PRESENT FOR THE FUTURE....

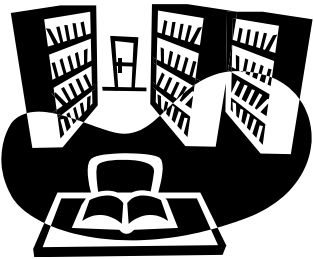
Benton County Historical Society Board Members

President; Ernie Wollak
Vice President: Char Dhein
Treasurer: Renee Kampa
Secretary: Melissa Keller
Director: Earl “Butch” Bukowski
Director: Pat Gerchy
Director: Bud Lubbesmeier
Director: Randy Schafer
Director: Merle Stowe

BCHS Board Meetings are held
the Third Tuesday of every month
at 6:30pm unless otherwise posted
at the Museum.

2010 Meeting Schedule:
(Tentative Schedule that may change due to weather or
Board motion)

September 21, 2010 (Annual Meeting)
October 19, 2010
November 16, 2010
December 21, 2010



NewsLines

BENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

September 2010

Lyndon Johnson’s Agate Collection New Museum Display starting Sept. 13th

Lyndon Johnson is a resident of Benton County that has been collecting agates for 17 years! Lyndon is very knowledgeable in agates and has brought into the museum his collection of agates and fossils. Although each gemstone is unique in coloring, size and pattern, he also has an “arrowhead” agate (one of only two known to exist-found in Sauk Rapids) as part of the collection he is showing. 98% of his collection has been personally found in Benton County and it is a real testament to the local history of gravel, mining, granite quarrying, and agriculture.

Lyndon has contacted the Guinness Book of World Records because his collection of agates is one of the largest in the nation and possibly in the world. He was featured in the St. Cloud Times in October of 2003, we had some of his collection at the Benton County Fair in August and he, and the agates were popular!

We are trying something new at the Benton County Historical Society Museum by looking for community members with collections of items that are part of the “Good Ole’ Days” of people’s memories. We are featuring Lyndon's collection at the museum starting on September 13, 2010. The collection will be here for about 2 months for everyone to see and enjoy. Lyndon will available for contact and information for anyone that would like more information on the collection.

Lyndon Johnson will also be doing a short presentation at our Annual Meeting on September 21, 2010 on the history of agates and the popularity.

Collecting agates was one of the items that people remember whether working the field, walking the rail-road tracks, or just finding them on the gravel roads. Glacier movement moved these rocks into a variety of areas in Minnesota and it is why we find Lake Superior type agates in this area. In the past, present and into the future, people have smiled at finding those agates which are a nature-made art forms. We hope to see you at the museum while the display is here!

Agate (pronounced [/ˈæɡət/](#)) is a microcrystalline variety of quartz silica chiefly chalcedony, characterized by its fineness of grain and brightness of color. Although agates may be found in various kinds of rock, they are classically associated with volcanic rocks but can be common in certain metamorphic rocks.



Lyndon Johnson pictured with part of his agate collection



Benton County Fair

Although the weather was HOT most of the week, (and the volunteers are probably shaking their heads “Yes” and are agreeing with that!) we had a great time visiting with everyone that came to our booth during the Fair!

Our theme for the booth was the “Good Ole’ Days” and we put together a display with a variety of items.

Part of the display was information on the History of Canning Jars and the canning food process. There were 1858 jars, 1880 jar styles, lightning top jars (wire and bail tops), colored canning jars, glass and metal ring tops, and of course the Ball blue jars! We also distributed recipes for homemade sauerkraut (and how to do it with crocks or jars) and had available a newspaper article of Marge Lavigne 's rhubarb recipes that was published. People were reading the history, asking questions and there were a lot of comments on the list of 325 Brands of canning jars available. We also had the kraut cutter with a crock, the hot water bath and a 1940’s gauge pressure canner. There was also quite a few questions on canning for today’s world!



To the right: Volunteers Andy and Bob Schwalboski with visitors→

The “Good Ole Days” also involved activities and hobbies that everyone could participate in at a low cost. Agate Collecting is one of the items that everyone remembered! Lyndon

Johnson was at our booth with part of his collection of agates and they were popular! Seems that everyone that visited our booth had at one time or another has had a few agates in their possession or found one while walking! We heard quite a few stories about walking the railroad tracks, gravel roads and working the fields! Talk about good memories!

Picture To Left: Lyndon Johnson and visitors to see the agates!



Annual Meeting September 21, 2010

The Annual Meeting of the Benton County Historical Society will be September 21, 2010. We have had good attendance holding the Annual Meeting at the Museum the past couple of years, so, the Board of Directors have decided to hold it here again!

Lyndon Johnson will do a short presentation on the history of his agate display and answer any questions that people in attendance may have.

The evening’s events will be 6:00 light supper (sandwiches salad, chips and beverage will start to be served) with social time, 6:30pm Board of Directors meeting with election of Board members and agenda business items, and a short presentation by Lyndon Johnson after the business meeting.



Come join us!

Annual Meeting Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Number attending _____ Money Enclosed: _____ \$6.00 cost per person

6:00pm Light Supper (croissant sandwiches, salad, chip, beverage-water & coffee

Tuesday, September 21, 2010– Board member Elections and Lyndon Johnson Speaker

Many Thanks to the Retired Educator’s listed for staffing the schoolhouse:

- Judy Rotto and family Anne Desmond Marge Bates Dorothy Olson Beulah Rose Hutchins
Helen Bauer Dorothy Fridgen The Draglands Marge Bookenoogen Dorothy Olson
Ginny Bisek Floyd & Linda Ayers Frank & Rosemary Roehl Mike Thomas Pat Hill
Marilyn Savage Joann Carlin Ruth Knutson Richard & Elaine Balder Barbara Hill
Fran Hillrowen Joyce Wittenhagen Alice Raeter John Augustin Eunice Cross Haidako Wolfer
Carolyn Garven Curt Hutchens Mary Alice Tomporowski Connie Lewandowski





Executive Director’s Corner

Hello Everyone!

Seems like the Summer of 2010 has just gone way too fast! It’s been amazing how the hot days have become so much cooler so quickly!

We managed to have some fun at the Benton County Fair booth this year! (even with the heat!)There were over 4000 people that stopped by our booth to chit-chat about the canning jars, agates, historical preservation of East St. Cloud and share some stories about memories of times past.

I am not surprised at the interest in the canning jars and canning food process. History repeats itself and people are renewing an interest in food preservation, more natural food with gardening, and getting back to some old skills; new again!

The agate collection was great and there was many a story heard of the most “valuable agate finds” from fields (picking rocks), railroad tracks (jumping railroad cars), and gravel pits! (a variety of activities went on in the pits according to the tellers of the stories!) Lyndon Johnson has a great collection and its presence at our fair booth was greatly appreciated! Stop by and see his complete collection here at the Museum.

We have some of the best volunteers known to mankind! My schedule was not filled when the fair started, but volunteers stopped by the booth to see what I had open and then took the shifts that were open! My words cannot convey the appreciation I have for the volunteers that helped staff the booth, so I will just say “THANK YOU”.

A HUGE thank you to the donators, volunteers and all people who support history in Benton County. There are a lot of great people who have and share information on families, historical events, businesses, church and cemetery records. We will continue to work with everyone we can to preserve the past, for the present and the future!

Mary Dabby



*Trees are your best
antiques
Alexander Smith*

Benton County Watab 2 Schoolhouse

The Retired Educators staffed the Watab District Number 2 Schoolhouse at the fair again this year! Over 4000 people visited the schoolhouse this year and WJON did an interview with Joyce Wittenhagen about the history and the schoolhouse programming.

The schoolhouse brings fond memories to education from years gone by. The teachers are amazing and it is truly a beautiful sight to see the smiles of grandparents and parents bringing their children in to see the “good ole’ days” and explain country school to the young ones. Thank you to all the educator’s that support this project!

If you are a teacher that has interest in joining us in staffing the schoolhouse for next year, please year, please call us at 253-9614 and I can put you in touch with Joyce Wittenhagen.



**Watab Number 2
Schoolhouse**



Benton County Fair (continued)

Pictured to the right is the Red Board of “Good Ole Days” newspaper articles →

We had a “Red Board” of historical newspaper articles featuring agricultural, hunting and leisure activities. Marge LaVigne was pictured with her rhubarb patch, the Pickle Factory in Foley , Fairview Farms (Koep farm) in Sauk Rapids, Tobacco crops, Chris Stauffenecker with the sturgeon; just to name a few.



Preservation Alliance of Minnesota joined our booth display at the Benton County Fair for 2010 because one of the 10 projects that are on the Endangered Historic Places is the proposed University Drive Corridor Project. Every year the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota puts out a new list of endangered properties.



The Southeast St. Cloud Neighborhood Preservation Coalition is a local preservation advocacy group that sprung up in response to the planned road construction in our local area. At risk are some of this neighborhood’s most identifiable and historic sites including: Selke Field, Riverside park, George Friedrich Park, Killian Boulevard and the east side quarries area.

The four display boards they presented provided the information on the projects; pictures for people to see the areas and buildings that would be affected with this road project and contact resources for additional information.

We have provided an informational link for you below to check out on the computer.

Preservation Alliance of Minnesota website: *You cannot raise a man up by*

www.mnpreservation.org *calling him down.*

(if you would like to know additional information) *William Boetcker*





DONATIONS TO BCHS

Marge Nierengarten– Pictures of Sacred Heart– altar and church, bride & groom chair, pre-siders chair and Barber’s Chair

Gery Hanscom– William Harris Descendants history

Ron Vierkant– Evelyn Vierkant roller skates, Trisian Milking stool, milking stool made by Ron in ag-school

Cliff Johnson– Kelsey Rae CD. Foley lumber yardstick, Cookbooks-Sauk Rapids ultimate, St. Augustine’s School, Al’s Music 2004, Headstart 1998, King Coin carwash keychain copy of Sauk Rapids Courthouse postcard

Bernie Wesenberg– Shelf from Sacred Heart pew racks, beeswax candles used for Requiem High Mass, Doily - used under statues

Anonymous– Boehm & Doehner advertising plate, Sauk Rapids Farmer Co-op Creamery Pitcher advertising promotional item

Ed & Helen Maier– Swinger Land Camera, GE Vacuum Cleaner from the 40’s

Naomi Larsen Family– Oil bottle, 2 spice bottles, Two brown medicine bottles, Mrs. Butterworth syrup container, Bi–Centennial Heinz Ketchup bottle, Slate chalkboard for school

Thanks to all
who donate!



Two Computers Donated!

In the last issue of the newsletter we put out a highlighted request to the community for the donation of two computers to Benton County Historical Society Museum to expand our internal services.

Steve Warzecha of Sartell Sub Inc. answered that request with a donation of two complete computers and a touch screen monitor!

One computer was installed in the research/resource area of the Museum, which allows the database information, copier and internet to be accessible for immediate and organized research to be done! The second computer will replace one of the older computers that cannot handle the information processing we are doing with spreadsheets. Thank you Steve for serving the members better!



Thanks to Steve Warzecha
& Sartell Sub Inc. for the
donation of two computers!



Thanks to our Anonymous Tree Remover!

We have been trying to get the flowerbeds back into shape around here. It has been a slow process as we have been trying to get to it as time would allow. We trimmed the bushes, weeded out the parking lot and sprayed, and we were looking for volunteers to pull the two bushes that had been overgrown and died in the front corner flowerbed.



So, as we were busy in the Museum today with some people doing research. I took a walk outside after our research people left and our bushes were pulled out and gone! What a great surprise for us!



We have no idea who helped us out. There were only the tracks of a vehicle on the grass, but to whoever helped us out– THANK YOU! Now, with those out of the way, we can weed and trim the rest and hopefully put something in there that is a bit more eye appealing!

Volunteers and Staff

Fred Joesting– Research Specialist	Maureen Athman– Transcriber	Staff:
Marjean Keehr– Research	Ron Zurek– Webmaster	Mary Ostby– Executive Director
Andy Schwalboski– Research & Displays	Jenny De Wenter– Museum Support	Meredith DePree– Office Support
Caren Kalenda– Oral Interviews/ Data Input	John Stafney–Database Coordinator	Miles Christie– Office Support/ Military Support
Lorane Walsh– Cemetery Support		Jack Toliver– Military Support
<i>What comes from the heart; goes to the heart....</i>		
<i>Samuel Taylor Coleridge</i>		

Tours and Travel Research

The Museum is always open from 10 am– 4pm Monday thru Friday for research and organizational tours. If these hours do not work for your organization, please give us a call at 253-9614 as we will be happy to arrange an after hours time for your group or doing your research! Just call a few days ahead and we will set times up for you!

